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Questions relating to information

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 63/100 B highlights recent communications campaigns of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat on key issues, such as the Millennium Development Goals, climate change, human rights and issues of peace and security. The growing role of the network of United Nations information centres — the Department field offices in 63 locations around the world — as a catalyst for redissemination of information at the local and regional levels is discussed. In outlining the Department's services to the media and civil society, the report pays particular attention to the expanded use of new information and communications technologies. It also includes an update on the outreach activities of the Department, including a section on its work with students.

* A/64/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 84 of Part VII of its resolution 63/100 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-first session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in that resolution. Accordingly, the Department of Public Information introduced three reports for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-first session, held from 4-15 May 2009 (A/AC.198/2009/2, 3 and 4). The deliberations of the Committee with regard to those reports are reflected in its report to the General Assembly.[1]

2. The present report, prepared in response to the above-mentioned resolution, updates the information provided to the Committee on Information and describes activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information in the first half of 2009 — from January to July — through its three subprogrammes; namely, the strategic communications services, the news services, and the outreach and knowledge-sharing services.

II. Strategic communications services

A. Thematic issues

1. Climate change

3. Working with the United Nations Communications Group Task Force on Climate Change and the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team, the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have developed the United Nations "Seal the Deal" campaign, which aims to promote support for a successful outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen in December. As convenor of the Task Force, which consists of 20 United Nations system entities, the Department plays a leading role in developing and implementing a system-wide strategy for communications on climate change. In addition to the campaign for the Copenhagen conference, the Task Force will focus on joint communications for the High-level Event on Climate Change to be convened by the Secretary-General on 22 September 2009.

- The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels is working in partnership with UNEP on a "Seal the Deal" website with information leading up to the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December.
- On 5 June, in connection with the observance of World Environment Day, as the main international event took place in Mexico, the United Nations Information Centre Mexico City supported UNEP in organizing the day's main event and in designing and updating a web page, especially prepared for the occasion.

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/64/21).

2. Publicizing the work of the General Assembly

Impact of the economic and financial crisis on development

4. Working closely with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the Department of Public Information provided communications support for the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development (24-26 June 2009, New York). A press kit, website and other materials were produced and media outreach was undertaken to raise awareness of the recommendations of the Commission on Experts of the President of the General Assembly on Reforms of International Monetary and Financial System (A/63/838) and the political process leading up to the Conference. Two regional press conferences featuring members of the Commission of Experts were organized by the United Nations information centres in Cairo and New Delhi, generating coverage by national media.

- More than 650 media clips were collected from the three days of the Conference, and interviews with members of the Commission of Experts were set up with media outlets including the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), National Public Radio of the United States of America, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Xinhua China News, and Japanese television stations.

Millennium Development Goals report 2009

5. The Department of Public Information arranged for a global launch of the 2009 report of the Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals at the opening of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva on 6 July. Regional events to launch the report were also organized by United Nations information centres and United Nations country teams in Brussels, Johannesburg, Moscow, New Delhi and Stockholm (coordinating five Nordic countries), with additional events to be held in Beijing and Seoul when senior officials visit there in late July and August. Press materials were also distributed by the larger network of United Nations information centres, and interviews were arranged. While the global launch generated articles by the main international wire services, regional outreach generated extensive coverage by national media.

- Media coverage for the launch of the report included: in the Nordic countries, over 20 print and broadcast reports, as well as four op-ed articles; in India, by 15 print media and 7 television stations; in the Benelux countries, over 20 news reports including 2 television stories; in the Middle East region, over 7 articles and wire service reports.

3. Influenza A(H1N1) virus

Special Task Force of the United Nations Communications Group

6. A special Task Force of the United Nations Communications Group, coordinated by the Department of Public Information, helped to maintain message coherence in communications within the United Nations system during the influenza A(H1N1) outbreak, which came to public attention in late April and was declared in June to have reached pandemic proportions. These actions helped to keep the United Nations system informed of the latest authorized information from the Secretary-General and the World Health Organization (WHO), and to maintain a consistent

and clear communications profile during the outbreak period. The Task Force also used this process as an opportunity to update and upgrade its membership and mechanisms. Beginning on 24 April, 19 bulletins containing advance or breaking news briefing notes or statements were sent out to the communication officials of the Task Force's 18 participating United Nations system entities. The Department hosted and helped to organize a review exercise by the Task Force in July for communicators and key officials from member organizations to evaluate inter-agency communications mechanisms and to shape future efforts.

- The United Nations Information Centre Mexico City undertook immediate measures to inform the public and United Nations Communications Group partners of the evolving situation. Through the local United Nations Communications Group, which it chairs, communications guidelines and information updates were shared region-wide in a timely manner. The Group also served as a discussion platform during the crisis. The United Nations Information Centre developed a website with information in Spanish on the outbreak, and also set up a communications centre on its premises for use by members of the United Nations country team.

4. International Women's Day 2009

7. Under the theme "Women and men united to end violence against women and girls", the Department worked to promote International Women's Day 2009, tying the observance in with the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign. Events at Headquarters, including a commemorative session attended by more than 600 people, held on 5 March, were publicized. Information materials for the Day and the campaign, including a campaign poster and Framework for Action booklet, were developed in six languages.

- As a result of the Department's media outreach, including a press conference and 10 interviews arranged for senior officials, 140 news stories on the Day appeared in international and regional media. Highlights include pieces by major news wires (Associated Press, Agence France-Presse and Xinhua News Agency of China), with the Associated Press article picked up by numerous publications, including the *Chicago Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

8. The network of United Nations information centres carried out numerous activities in observance of the Day, often in partnership with local government authorities. These activities included:

- **United Nations Information Centre Bucharest:** Art exhibit at the United Nations House focusing on the condition of women in Africa
- **United Nations Information Centre Cairo:** Special supplement in the daily newspaper *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, published in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women
- **United Nations Information Centre Harare:** Large public event that included United Nations representatives, government officials, diplomats and over 5,000 women, representing different political parties and organizations

5. Department of Public Information and United Nations peacekeeping operations

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

9. The Department of Public Information cooperated closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support on activities designed to mark the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers (29 May), this year dedicated to women in United Nations peacekeeping, with the slogan, "The Power to Empower." A photo exhibition on women in peacekeeping was displayed at United Nations Headquarters, where it could be seen by tens of thousands of visitors, and was made available to all other United Nations offices. In addition to the joint press release issued by the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to mark the Day, the Department issued more than 20 separate press releases targeting police and troop-contributing countries which lost uniformed peacekeepers in 2008.

10. The network of United Nations information centres observed the Day with a variety of activities, including:

- **United Nations Information Centre Ouagadougou:** Television debate on the contribution of United Nations peacekeeping operations in promoting peace in Africa
- **United Nations Information Centre New Delhi:** Launch of the book entitled *For the Honour of India: A History of Indian Peacekeeping Experiences*, by Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, organized by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping of the United Services Institution of India in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs and Army Headquarters
- **Peru:** Special ceremony on the occasion of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, organized by the Ministry of Defence (Training Centre for Peacekeeping Operations) and United Nations Information Centre Lima

Using new media to promote peacekeeping and disarmament

11. The Department has been working closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on how to employ new media methodologies to promote United Nations peacekeeping and to further engage young audiences. In this regard, new media experts working in Africa participated in the sixth annual workshop of the Department of Public Information-Department of Peacekeeping Operations on public information in peacekeeping, held in June 2009 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, and discussed new and rapid ways to communicate with host populations.

12. On 13 June, 100 days before the International Day of Peace, the Department launched a multiplatform campaign dedicated to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation called "WMD-WeMustDisarm". Each day the Department issues a "reason to disarm" message over Twitter, Facebook and MySpace. The Secretary-General issued the first 10 messages and will be further engaged in the campaign as it evolves.

13. These new media endeavours complement, but do not replace, other traditional forms of communication, and the Department of Public Information is working closely with both the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and relevant peace operations on capturing and developing best practices, particularly the use of troops

as communicators and the use of non-traditional communicators, communication centres and town hall outreach campaigns in multilayered communications plans.

6. Question of Palestine

14. The Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Government of Brazil, organized the annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, in Rio de Janeiro on 27 and 28 July 2009. Entitled "Promoting Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue — A View from South America", this was the seventeenth in a series and the first to be held in the region. Over 150 participants from Brazil and other countries in Latin America, the Middle East, and other parts of the world attended, including current and former policymakers, government officials, mayors, representatives of civil society and academia, and journalists. The seminar was extensively covered by major Brazilian media outlets, including *Agencia Brasil*, *O Globo*, *Folha de São Paulo*, *O Estado de São Paulo*, *O Dia*, *Jornal do Brasil*, as well as by media in other parts of world, such as *Agence France-Presse*, *France 24*, *Emirates Tribune*, *Yedioth Aheronot*, *Maariv*, *Haaretz The Jerusalem Report*, *Al-Ayyam*, *Al-Quds*, *WAFA* and *Maan News Agencies*, *Vrema Novesti*, *Milliyet*, *Die Press*, *The Media News Line Agency*, *Addoustour* and *Petra*.

15. In collaboration with the Institute for Global Leadership, a United States-based non-governmental organization, the Department of Public Information arranged a press conference at United Nations Headquarters in March 2009, featuring a former Palestinian fighter and a former Israeli soldier, members of the Jerusalem-based Combatants for Peace, as part of a speaking tour throughout the United States. The two men, who lost close relatives during the conflict, are part of a movement of more than 600 former Israeli soldiers and former Palestinian fighters who opted for non-violent means to end violence in the area.

16. Preparations are ongoing for the 2009 training programme for young Palestinian journalists, which will take place in New York, Washington, D.C., and Geneva, from 9 November to 11 December. Nine candidates (five women and four men) have been selected to participate in this year's programme, the objective of which is to strengthen the skills and capacity of young Palestinian journalists. It will focus on broadcast journalism, including training with Internet-based media.

7. Human rights

Durban Review Conference

17. The Department of Public Information developed information materials for the Durban Review Conference, held in April 2009 in Geneva, including a poster, a press kit folder and a conference website in the six official United Nations languages. The Department also assigned a senior official to serve as the Conference spokesperson. United Nations information centres placed an op-ed article on the Conference by the High-Commissioner for Human Rights in 25 publications in 19 countries, and translated it into eight local languages from the original English.

Rwanda genocide outreach programme

18. The fifteenth commemoration of the Rwanda genocide was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 7 April 2009. The event, which included a solemn candle-lighting ceremony, was attended by the President of the General

Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations and genocide survivors, among others. The event received good press coverage, including by *The Wall Street Journal*, CNN and all major wire services. Also, as part of the commemoration, the Department oversaw the production and installation of the "Visions of Rwanda" exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in April and May 2009.

Indigenous issues

19. The Department of Public Information produced and disseminated worldwide through the information centres a comprehensive press kit for the eighth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in May 2009. The Department arranged press briefings and interviews with Forum members, including for many Spanish-language media outlets, such as EFE, Notimex, DPA and AP (in Spanish). The Department also mobilized information centres to translate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in nearly 20 additional languages (including many indigenous languages).

8. New Partnership for Africa's Development

20. The Department's quarterly magazines, *Africa Renewal* and *Afrique renouveau*, continued to play an important role in raising awareness of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and generating support for its goals and accomplishments. The Department paid particular attention to producing information aimed at raising international awareness of Africa's special needs in relation to the global financial and economic crisis. In-depth articles were published in the two magazines and posted on the Africa Renewal website.

21. As a result of the Department's work to raise public awareness of NEPAD, 61 short feature articles (15 each in English, French and Kiswahili, 10 in Spanish, 3 in Portuguese and 3 in Greek) were published 396 times in major English, French and Kiswahili-language media. Media in Africa which regularly published these stories included *Business Day* (South Africa), *Daily Graphic* and *Public Agenda* (Ghana), *The Nation* (Kenya), *Public Eye* (Lesotho), *Morocco Daily*, *Punch* and *ThisDay* (Nigeria), *Le Messager* (Cameroon), *L'Essor* (Mali), *Walfadjri* (Senegal), *Mail* and *Guardian* online (South Africa). Articles were also featured in *The Wall Street Journal* online and *USA Today* (USA), and two major website portals, Afrik.com and allAfrica.com.

22. The Department played an active role in a media dialogue held at Riviera on Vaal, South Africa, in February, organized by the Advocacy and Communications Cluster of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism for NEPAD, of which the Department of Public Information is a core member. Among those taking part were *All Global Media* which runs allAfrica.com, *El Yom* (Egypt), *Ghanaian Chronicle*, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, *Alakhbar* (Lebanon), *L'Express* (Mauritius), CNN (Africa correspondent) and the London-based *New Africa* and *New Africa Business* magazines.

B. United Nations Communications Group

23. The eighth annual meeting of the United Nations Communications Group at the level of principals was held on 25 and 26 June 2009 in Bangkok at the

headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Attended by 29 United Nations Communications Group member organizations, the meeting agreed to:

(a) Broaden to the widest possible extent the "Seal the Deal" as the umbrella outreach campaign of the United Nations system in support of a global treaty on climate change;

(b) Encourage United Nations country teams to continue strengthening their United Nations Communications Group and the Development Operations Coordination Office to develop graphic guidelines and templates for United Nations country web sites and other online or printed joint communications;

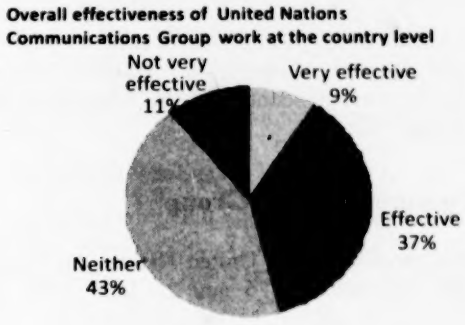
(c) Continue liaising with the network of United Nations information centres through the Department of Public Information for advance planning and joint communications on United Nations priority themes;

(d) Call upon the senior leadership of the United Nations system organizations to be open and supportive of the efforts of its staff to engage in new media, including social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs, to further the aims of the Organization;

(e) Establish a Task Force, coordinated by the Department of Public Information, to develop a communications strategy on the global financial and economic crisis, as requested by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

(f) Endorse a set of revised draft guidelines on the appointment and activities of United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace.

24. At the local level, building partnerships with United Nations system organizations through the United Nations Communications Group remains a priority for the Department. Over 100 country-level Communications Groups have been established, often with United Nations information centres in the lead. In June this year, the Department conducted a global survey of all country teams on the work of the United Nations Communications Group at the local level. A plurality of respondents said the United Nations Communications Group in their country was effective. However, many respondents gave a mixed review, indicating that there were several challenges that needed to be addressed to make the United Nations Communications Groups more effective (see chart below). The Department of Public Information will work with United Nations country teams to improve the overall effectiveness of the Groups.


Overall effectiveness of United Nations Communications Group work at the country level
Not very effective 11%
Very effective 9%
Effective 37%
Neither 43%

C. United Nations information centres

Strengthening communications and coherence at the country level

25. The network of 63 United Nations information centres continues to be central to the Department's efforts to bring the United Nations story to people around the world. Over the course of the past year, the Department continued its efforts to strengthen the communications capacity of these centres and, through United Nations Communications Groups at the national and regional levels, to promote system-wide coherence in their work with the rest of the United Nations system.

26. The communications efforts within country teams that information centres have led or helped to coordinate include joint websites, newsletters and other information material, launches of major flagship reports issued by United Nations agencies, the joint observance of international days, and major communications campaigns.

- The United Nations Information Service in Vienna, with as many as 10 United Nations entities located in that city, has developed a workplan that includes strengthening the visitors' service at the Vienna International Centre, expanding a roster of speakers and organizing a teachers' conference about the United Nations
- United Nations information centre Dar es Salaam, as chair of the local United Nations Communications Group, has produced several issues of a newsletter that reflects the consolidated operation of the United Nations system in the country. This is especially noteworthy, as the United Republic of Tanzania is a "One UN" pilot country.

27. In April, six directors and information officers from information centres participated in Abuja in a strategic communications workshop for communications officers in Africa, organized by the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office. The workshop focused on aligning and integrating communications strategies with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and on using communications tools to promote coherence, effectiveness and relevance in communications. It also explored ways to strengthen United Nations Communications Groups at the country level by sharing best practices and lessons learned.

Enhancing the use of new media

28. The United Nations information centres are using videoconferencing and webcasting technologies to connect with remote and diverse partners and constituencies. The emerging trends in new media also provide the Department and its field offices with new ways to reach new and younger audiences.

- In January, in observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, the United Nations information centres in Antananarivo, Bujumbura, Dakar, Lomé and Yaoundé participated in a videoconference on the Holocaust for students, together with the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris and United Nations Headquarters in New York
- Over 100 online participants from different parts of Mexico and from across Latin America took part via webcast in a "chat" forum (to ask questions in real

time) as part of a workshop in March on non-governmental organization association with the Department of Public Information, organized by the United Nations information centre Mexico City.

III. News services

A. Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

29. The Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General conducts the daily noon briefing and keeps the press, delegations and the public informed, not only of the work of the Secretary-General, but also of developments throughout the United Nations system. During the past year (July 2008 through June 2009), the Spokesperson held 250 daily press briefings. The Office also organized 53 press conferences given by the Secretary-General at Headquarters and abroad, 111 press briefings by Member States, 183 press conferences by senior officials and 5 background briefings. In addition, the Office coordinated 45 press encounters and 107 press interviews with the Secretary-General at Headquarters and during his official visits to Member States. The Office also coordinated the logistics related to the participation of groups of journalists who accompanied the Secretary-General on six of his trips overseas.

B. United Nations website

30. As part of its continuing efforts to improve the structure, usability and visual attractiveness of the United Nations website, the Department carried out a major revamping of the top layers of the site — from the splash page to over 200 underlying pages in all six official languages. The new design incorporates a common branding element that fits in well with any content style and features improved navigation, in part through enhanced cross-linkages and colour coding of groups of pages. Users are now able to access content with fewer clicks. In keeping with General Assembly resolutions, the new pages are compliant with the accessibility requirements set out in the new web accessibility guidelines for United Nations websites.

31. In parallel with the revamp, work continued on a new companion site for mobile devices that is currently being tested for compatibility in all languages. This is part of a wider effort to disseminate material through new media and interactive forms of communication, including popular social networking sites. The Department is exploring new ways to deliver more content on demand in the form of podcasts and video podcasts (vodcasts) and to make it easier for consumers to share United Nations material with others.

32. Overall, during the first half of 2009, the United Nations website continued to register a steady growth in traffic. During that time the number of visits exceeded 44,460,000 — a 34 per cent increase over the corresponding period last year. Likewise, there was a 21 per cent rise in page views to 317,939,596 over the same time frame.

33. The Web Services Section of the Department continued to play a leading role in updating the site's content, with 5,678 pages uploaded in the first six months of 2009. The table below shows the new and updated pages in 2008 and 2009.

New pages created and updated in first six months of 2009 and 2008

	Arabic	*Chinese**	*English*	*French*	*Russian*	*Spanish*	*Total*
New 2009	842	1 743	477	537	1 150	929	**5 678**
Updated 2009	1 088	2 787	1 433	2 437	2 617	7 071	**17 433**
New 2008	877	1 182	851	553	1 250	826	**5 539**
Updated 2008	2 362	2 418	2 553	1 208	3 162	6 781	**18 484**

* New pages: 1,169 (web pages) + 574 (mobile device pages).

Multilingualism and accessibility by persons with disabilities

34. Efforts towards parity among the official languages remain a high priority for the Department, which continues to encourage other content-providing offices to ensure that their contents are made available in all official languages. However, given the fact that more content is produced in English, and that the resources available for translation are limited, it is impractical to expect a closing of the gap with the other official languages with the current level of resources.

35. The Web accessibility guidelines finalized last year have gone a long way towards assisting content-providing offices in developing web pages accessible by persons with disabilities. At the same time, efforts to ensure accessibility have increased the time required to develop and launch new sites.

United Nations website and governance

36. The Department of Public Information, in consultation with the newly established Office of Information and Communications Technology, has proposed the establishment of a two-tier governance mechanism for the website, which has begun functioning following approval by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The highest tier is the Internet Steering Committee, established at the level of Under-Secretary-General. The Committee is assisted and supported in its functions by the Internet Governance Group, which oversees the setting of policies and standards and their implementation and replaces the Working Group on Internet Matters of the Publications Board.

37. The Internet Steering Committee provides oversight of the development and implementation of an Internet strategy for the United Nations Secretariat, reviews and decides upon recommendations made by the Internet Governance Group, including on the implementation of policies and standards on United Nations Secretariat websites, and on technical and content standards for issuance as administrative instructions and/or Secretary-General's Bulletins. The Internet Steering Committee also reviews cases of non-compliance with standards and policies, and decides on the course of action to bring about compliance. As part of its terms of reference, the Internet Steering Committee reports to the Secretary-General on Internet issues of strategic importance for the Organization.

United Nations News Centre

38. The *UN News Centre*, the principal online gateway for breaking news about the work of the United Nations at its Headquarters in New York and throughout the entire United Nations system, remained one of the most popular destinations on the United Nations site, showing sustained interest by users for all its language versions. Its database-driven platform allowed the stories published on the portal to be automatically retrieved on a growing number of pages on the United Nations website, including the newly redesigned home page, thus ensuring continuous updates of the latest developments. At the same time, the *UN News Centre* stories remained a reliable source of news about the United Nations for an array of external websites, from popular news aggregators, such as Google News and allAfrica.com, to outlets of media companies, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations.

39. Beyond breaking news, the portal's coverage in 2009 focused on an array of special events and observances, including the one-year anniversary of Cyclone Nargis. In addition, the portal continued to develop its *News Focus* segment designed to provide easy access to key sources materials on issues in the news. For example, special pages on the developments related to the H1N1 influenza, as well as to Sri Lanka were created.

Webcasting

40. The externally hosted multimedia portal of the Department of Public Information continued to serve as a key destination for accessing live and on-demand video on the United Nations website. At the same time, to fully utilize the synergies between the Department's television broadcast and online streaming operations, the Department's webcast unit took on the lead role in managing and upgrading the United Nations Channel on YouTube. Since January 2009, over 400 new videos covering a wide range of United Nations developments and issues were uploaded onto that web page that showed a steady growth in viewership.

C. Radio, television and photo services

United Nations Radio

41. The Department continued to expand its network of broadcasting partners, now spanning 126 countries, while at the same time making every effort to harness the power of the Internet to bring audio directly to listeners around the world. United Nations Radio also made its programming more appealing to broadcasters by providing varied formats and improved timeliness. News stories are now updated on United Nations Radio websites throughout the day. In one example of the success of this approach, continuous news updates by the Spanish Unit of United Nations Radio led to a sharp increase in downloads, from 3,168 in July 2008 to 58,511 in June 2009.

- Since January 2009, the following broadcasters were added to the list of media outlets receiving United Nations Radio material: Radio National Guinée, West Africa Democracy Radio, Radio Shanghai, China Telecom, Arirang Radio, Kyodo News, Lithuania Public Radio, the European Commission, Radio Nacional de Colombia, Voice of Israel, and Iowa Public Radio

42. The efforts of United Nations Radio to explore new distribution platforms are also bearing fruit. An analysis of usage patterns in April and May 2009 shows that United Nations Radio programmes are rapidly gaining new listeners on iTunes, a popular podcast site with audiences in different parts of the world. The increase was particularly noticeable for Chinese and English programmes, with iTunes accounting for over a quarter of the 70,000 downloads registered by United Nations Radio during the months of April and May.

43. The Department continued to improve access to archival material through a special segment on the United Nations Radio website, *UN Radio Classics* (www.unmultimedia.org/radio/library/classics/). Featuring historic United Nations audio materials — from old radio programmes to historic speeches, the *UN Radio Classics* page grows richer on a regular basis as a result of a concerted effort to digitize and preserve legacy sound from the audio library of the Department of Public Information. These audio files are also available via iTunes podcast.

- The United Nations Radio special series "The Food Crisis: Danger and Opportunity" was named a finalist in the Best Special Report category of the New York Festivals Radio Programming and Promotion Awards.

United Nations Television

44. Live coverage by United Nations Television of Security Council and General Assembly meetings, the activities of the Secretary-General, press conferences, stakeouts and a variety of special events at United Nations Headquarters continues to be widely used by broadcasters and international news syndicators. In addition to live news coverage, the two flagship television programmes of the Department — the magazine *21st Century* and the *UN in Action* feature series — expanded their reach. They featured priority themes and issues on the United Nations agenda, such as development, peace and security, eradication of poverty, the HIV/AIDS epidemic and human rights, and peacekeeping.

- Earlier this year, *21st Century* won the Silver World Medal (2009) from the New York Festivals in the category "Magazine Format".

45. The Web-based UNifeed service, enabling media outlets to easily download broadcast-quality video, was launched only a year ago and has already gained a wide array of users, including major world broadcasters such as CNN International, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and CBS News. The number of UNifeed clients grew more than tenfold, bringing the current total to 1,122 in 27 countries on four continents. Web traffic analysis indicates that an ever-growing number of outlets rely on the service during major international developments, such as the crisis in Gaza early this year, when there was a noticeable spike in the frequency of downloads of UNifeed stories.

46. A similar trend was noticeable on the United Nations-branded channel on the online video-sharing site YouTube, which now features excerpts from the Secretary-General's statements, video from the United Nations Television series, special interviews with United Nations Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors, statements by senior United Nations officials, and coverage of special events.

- The Secretary-General's news conference on the H1N1 influenza generated particularly strong interest, registering nearly 150,000 views.

United Nations photo service

47. The Department continues to distribute its photographs, including high-resolution digital images, on its web page (www.unmultimedia.org/photo/). The use of the United Nations Photo site remained high, with 29,501 downloads of high-resolution images made from January to June 2009. The Department is also exploring possibilities presented by an array of new media sites. In February 2009, it began posting selected United Nations photographs on Flickr.com, a popular photo-sharing site that attracts a large number of younger users and the Internet blogging community. The Department is also using popular online tools and social networking sites, such as RSS feeds and Twitter, to alert anyone following current events at the United Nations about the availability of new photo content on the United Nations Photo page.

- To date, the United Nations Flickr site (www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo) has recorded over 42,000 views.

D. Placement of op-ed articles

48. As part of its news-related operations, the Department continued to provide assistance to senior United Nations officials in the placement of their articles in newspapers and other media outlets around the world. Combining efforts of its staff in New York with the local expertise of United Nations information centres around the world, in the first half of 2009 the Department ensured the publication of 18 op-ed pieces, including 12 articles by the Secretary-General. The articles, which focused on some of the most urgent challenges facing the international community, appeared in a total of 142 newspapers around the globe in a wide range of languages.

- The Secretary-General's op-ed article entitled "Growing Green", authored jointly with the former Vice-President of the United States of America, Al Gore, was carried by 35 newspapers on all continents.

IV. Outreach and knowledge-sharing services

A. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

49. Through its training and customized coaching programmes and through direct research support services of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and its branch libraries in the map, legal and economic and social affairs fields, the Department of Public Information has been addressing the information needs of Secretariat and mission staff. Individuals are trained to understand how to better manage and access information and improve the utilization of the vast array of technology and information tools at their disposal. In 2009, the training and coaching programmes have been revised to respond to the loss of the Library training room owing to the Capital Master Plan. Emphasis is now placed on one-on-one and small group training rather than large group sessions. This will continue until an alternative training room is secured.

50. Access to high-quality information resources via electronic means continues to be facilitated by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, through the management of the

United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisition Consortium. Resources are made available to users at Headquarters and worldwide through United Nations system offices. Electronic access will be especially crucial during the implementation of the Capital Master Plan. Digitization of major Security Council documents from sessions held from 1946 to 1992, in English, French and Spanish was completed by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in April 2009, thereby expanding the coverage in the United Nations Official Document System (ODS). Collaboration continued with the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva, which has been digitizing Arabic, Chinese and Russian Security Council documents. Digitization of major General Assembly documents in English, French and Spanish, from the forty-second to forty-seventh sessions, commenced in close cooperation with the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management of the United Nations Secretariat.

51. Over the past three years, the depository library programme has coordinated a series of regional workshops promoting a new direction for the programme and giving increased focus to information outreach and new roles for libraries as United Nations partners. Programmes in 2009 include a workshop for depository librarians representing 10 countries and United Nations information centre staff from southern Africa in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, in March 2009 and a workshop held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, for representatives of nine depository librarians as well as representatives of local public and university libraries.

B. Department of Public Information and non-governmental organizations

52. Effective January 2009, association priority was given to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) where the Department of Public Information/non-governmental organizations annual conference will be held. As the 2009 Conference will take place in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the United Nations information centres in the region organized several workshops to inform NGOs about the process of affiliation with the Department of Public Information. As a result of their work and the support of the Government of Mexico, the Department of Public Information associated a total of 57 NGOs in the first half of 2009, with 49 NGOs coming from the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

53. In a comprehensive review of NGOs from around the world, the Department of Public Information formally disassociated 239 NGOs that were no longer active. The Department organized a two-day orientation programme for newly associated NGOs, as well as three whole-day communications workshops.

54. The sixty-second Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, the second to be held outside United Nations Headquarters in New York, entitled "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!", is scheduled to be held in Mexico from 9 to 11 September 2009. The Conference is being organized in partnership with the Non-Governmental Organizations/Department of Public Information Executive Committee, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Government of Mexico.

55. The Department also continued to hold weekly briefings for NGOs. Briefings were held on a wide range of subjects, including the global economic crisis, sports for development, forced labour, sustainable peace and reconciliation, and

disarmament. Briefings were also used as an opportunity to mark the observance of International Days such as: the International Day of Remembrance of Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the first World Day of Social Justice and the International Day of Peacekeepers. The Department of Public Information has introduced several new series to highlight special topics of interest. Some examples include the "May I Ask a Question?" series, which allows participating NGOs to address questions to a high-level United Nations official or a stakeholder, and the "Issues of the Moment" series, which follows current events and how they impact civil society.

C. Journalists' Fellowship Programme

56. For the twenty-ninth consecutive year, the Department will bring a group of journalists from developing countries to New York in September-October 2009 to participate in the Reha i Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme. The six-week programme familiarizes junior and mid-level journalists with the work of the United Nations while giving them an opportunity to serve as temporary United Nations correspondents for their home media organizations. Countries selected for this year's programme are Bahrain, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kiribati, Mali, Mauritania, Panama, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Turkmenistan and Ukraine.

- Since its inception in 1981, 397 journalists from 160 countries have participated in the Journalists' Fellowship Programme of the Department of Public Information.

D. Creative Community Outreach Initiative

57. In recognition of the enormous potential for outreach through television and film, the Secretary-General's Creative Community Outreach Initiative was launched as a one-stop-shop for writers, directors, producers and broadcasters interested in portraying the United Nations and its issues in their work. The Initiative offers script review, technical advice and logistical assistance, and acts as a liaison with substantive United Nations offices to provide accurate information. Several noteworthy projects were completed during the first half of 2009. An episode of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, which focused on child soldiers, was shot on location at United Nations Headquarters, the first primetime television series to be granted such access. Two special events (in New York and Los Angeles) co-hosted with the SCI FI Channel featured discussion with the cast and creators of *Battlestar Galactica* and United Nations experts on human rights, terrorism, children and armed conflict and post-conflict reconciliation. A two-day forum of film and discussion, "Envision: Addressing Global Issues through Documentaries", co-hosted with the Independent Filmmaker Project, focused on the Millennium Development Goals and women.

E. International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

58. The fourth annual observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust was held in January 2009 under the theme "An authentic basis for hope: Holocaust remembrance and education". The solemn ceremony also paid a tribute to the Second World War veterans who liberated the Nazi death camps. Other activities included an NGO briefing on "The Sephardic Jews in Greece: The untold story"; a screening of the film *Watermarks*; a book signing with the Holocaust Survivors Memoirs Project; and an exhibit entitled "Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race", developed by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

59. Helping to ensure that future generations will learn from the lessons of the Holocaust, the Department forged a pro-bono partnership with the University of London and the Holocaust Centre in the United Kingdom to launch the "Footprints for Hope" educational materials for middle schools around the world. Continuing to combat Holocaust denial, the Department distributed teaching guidelines on combating anti-Semitism, which were developed by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw. The Department also published a discussion paper on the history of the Jews in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The plight of the Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust was the subject of a second discussion paper and the theme of an exhibit at the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations, where the Department representative made opening remarks.

F. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery

60. The Department organized the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 62/122. On 25 March a cultural evening and concert entitled "Breaking the Silence, Beating the Drum" was staged in the General Assembly Hall. The event was the centrepiece of the commemoration, with a chorus of celebrities and dignitaries collectively honouring the resilience of the human spirit and triumph over adversity. The Department also organized a series of other activities to raise awareness of the Day and its aims. Further details are included in the report of the Secretary-General on the educational outreach programme on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery.*

G. Working with students

61. The Department of Public Information will organize the first ever United Nations-organized Global Model United Nations, which will be held in Geneva from 5 to 7 August 2009, under the theme "The Millennium Development Goals: Lifting the Bottom Billion out of Poverty". Global Model United Nations will be an annual event that will rotate to major United Nations duty stations around the world. The 2009 conference, to be developed as a best practice, will be a simulation of General Assembly plenary sessions and the Main Committees of the Assembly. More than

* To be issued.

500 university-level students from nearly 60 countries, ages 18 to 24, will participate. In preparation for the conference, two workshops were held at United Nations Headquarters to train students who will lead the Global Model United Nations Secretariat and General Assembly in Assembly procedure and the role of the Secretariat. In addition, a series of live webchats, with presentations by United Nations experts and members of the diplomatic corps, was organized on issues to be discussed at the conference. The GMUN conference website has received approximately 13,000 hits in one month. The United Nations Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Federal Credit Union provided financial support for the participation of students from developing and least developed countries.

62. In December 2009, the Department is organizing its fourteenth annual international student conference, which has been successful in raising awareness about the importance of peace and developing a culture of peace among youth worldwide. Approximately 800 students will be invited to United Nations Headquarters to interact with United Nations Messengers of Peace and with United Nations peacekeepers via videoconference on disarmament and non-proliferation. The United Nations Cyberschoolbus website will link to the live webcast of the event to encourage the participation of young people everywhere and provide educational resources on weapons of mass destruction, small arms, landmines and child soldiers. In addition, the Department of Public Information will publish and distribute a Student Action Toolkit on Disarmament just prior to the International Day of Peace.

H. Academic Impact initiative

63. A new programme of engagement with centres of higher education, learning and research has begun to facilitate a more direct input of the ideas generated by them into the policies, programmes and activities of the United Nations. The Academic Impact has been endorsed by more than 30 international scholastic networks of institutions. More than 100 individual institutions have affiliated with Academic Impact. In addition to geographical diversity, they command a range of thematic disciplines from art to medicine, technology to social science, representative of the vast terrain of the United Nations mandate itself.

I. Guided tours and briefings for visitors

64. As of 16 October 2008, the Guided Tour operation began shifting to a full time staff of 28 guides, now classified as Public Information Assistants with better contractual benefits than had been provided under the Agreement on Occasional Employment contract. The number of people who took a guided tour of the United Nations from 1 January to 30 June 2009 declined to 118,653, from 166,415 for the first six months of 2008. This was due in part to the change in the contractual status and attendant decrease in the number of tour guides. The introduction of audio tours later this year is expected to reverse this trend.

65. In conjunction with guided tours, visiting groups often request briefings by United Nations officials on United Nations-related topics. From 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, the Department of Public Information organized 777 in-house briefings, 58 outside speaking engagements and 26 videoconferences. During the

same period, the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department responded to approximately 19,338 communications, including from some 3,000 visitors, who requested written or other information about the Organization.

66. In connection with Capital Master Plan requirements, the Department has redesigned the tour route at its new location which wraps around the General Assembly Hall, creating a special corridor for the Millennium Development Goals, new graphic displays on human rights, peacekeeping and the Security Council as well as updated sections for the disarmament and decolonization displays. Several video elements have also been added to the new route, which was launched on 1 May 2009. Other improvements are ongoing.

J. Exhibitions

67. During the period, more than 30 exhibitions were displayed in the Visitors' Lobby, including those relating to General Assembly-mandated observances, such as the Holocaust remembrance and the remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

K. Print and online products and services

UN Chronicle

68. The *UN Chronicle* magazine's issue No. 1 & 2 of 2009, a double issue in English and French, had a special section devoted to disarmament. United Nations and non-governmental experts analysed trends in proliferation and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, small arms and anti-personnel mines. It also carried an article by the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict on girl soldiers and rape as a weapon of war. Issue 3 of 2009 will focus on climate change, with articles by a variety of expert writers.

Yearbook of the United Nations

69. The Department of Public Information finalized the preparation of volume 60 of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, covering United Nations system activities during 2006, and started preparation of volume 61, which will cover developments during 2007. All 60 editions of the *Yearbook* published so far will also be available to an ever-widening audience on the new Yearbook website.

The United Nations Today

70. *The United Nations Today* (formerly: *Basic Facts About the United Nations*), now thoroughly revised and expanded, was published in English. Editions in French and Spanish are in preparation.

iSeek

71. Further progress has been made in the direction of carrying out the "One UN" initiative through internal communications designed for the Secretariat. iSeek, the Secretariat Intranet, is now launched as the default home page at all eight major duty stations, including Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Santiago and Vienna. In addition to peacekeeping missions, all United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) field offices, all United Nations information centres sites, seven subregional offices of the five regional commissions and three

regional disarmament offices (the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) have iSeek access. Work is continuing to improve access for all offices, and ensuring access to the main iSeek content by funds and programmes.

72. Access to iSeek content is now available on the deleGATE website (www.un.int), which was redesigned in collaboration with the Working Group on Informatics to specifically meet the information needs of delegations working at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The website also includes links to essential information resources and delegate-specific tools.

Graphic design

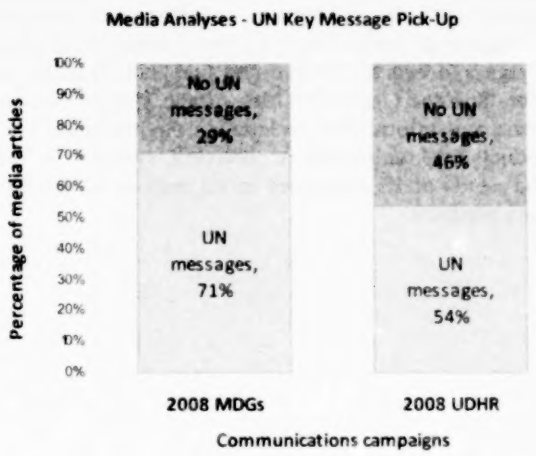
73. The graphic designers of the Department of Public Information, responsible for creating visual identity for the Department's products, created the UN4U graphic identifier that has been used to illustrate the United Nations overall reach in a colourful way, for both internal and external use. Several Web-based initiatives, such as United Nations Staff, Serving as One, UMOJA and ICT Fast Forward, have also used graphic identifiers to visually brand each initiative. The most recent example of such efforts is the graphic developed for the Unlearning Intolerance Seminar on "Cyber Hate: Danger in Cyber Space", which used the same design for various products such as vinyl banners, posters, postcards and the Web.

Sales and marketing

74. To achieve greater efficiency, a decision has been made to phase out the Sales and Marketing Office in Geneva and to centralize the operations at New York Headquarters. This important restructuring initiative will streamline the sales and marketing activities and permit the reallocation of necessary resources to create an online publishing platform of the United Nations publications. Related to these changes is the outsourcing of warehousing, order fulfilment and customer service operations of United Nations publications. These measures will help make the operation more efficient in the areas of customer service, reporting procedures and use of human resources.

V. A culture of evaluation

75. Continuing its emphasis on evaluation as a strategic component of its work, the Department of Public Information undertook long-term analysis of media trends on key issues. These analyses show that major conferences boost overall volume of coverage, and that United Nations spokespeople continue to play an important role in conveying key United Nations messages. A changing media landscape has increased the importance of alternate channels of communication, such as using new social media tools. One key finding of the evaluation of the communications campaign to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was that websites with interactive features attract more visitors.



76. These findings have led to two initiatives. First, guidelines to govern which technologies can be used on United Nations websites are being developed. Secondly, the Department has created a task force that will explore ways in which the Department of Public Information can effectively use new media on the Internet.

77. The Department of Public Information is also taking steps to revise its methods of collecting user feedback. For example, United Nations Radio now combines web download data with the information from stations receiving programmes by more traditional methods. The result is a more accurate picture of usage patterns and shows that United Nations Radio's programming is used by a wider spectrum of radio stations than was previously estimated.

VI. Conclusions

78. Bearing in mind the information provided in the present report, the following conclusions are highlighted:

(a) The Department of Public Information has made progress, both in terms of expanding its outreach and delivering the Organization's messages on priority areas.

(b) Media analyses carried out by the Department have reinforced the importance of high-profile events as a powerful platform for garnering global media attention. The assessments have also shown that in a rapidly changing media environment, the Department can no longer rely on press releases and press conferences as the primary vehicle for promoting and disseminating news and information about the United Nations. It has to use additional creative channels for providing timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information to the widest possible global audience.

(c) The Department is actively enhancing and diversifying the range of its programmes, products and services for Member States, civil society, youth and the general public. It initiates and coordinates effective communications strategies on

priority issues and carries out communications campaigns to support the substantive goals of the Organization, with the objective of broadening an understanding of its work. It is also expanding and forming new partnerships with different constituencies to engage and educate people and their communities worldwide to encourage support for the ideals and activities of the United Nations. And in a rapidly changing media and information technology environment, the Department has adapted its products and enhanced its delivery systems to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its audiences in all regions of the world for text, audio, visual and photo products.